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Mr. Gladstone, the Liberal Statesman.

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BY JAMES D. PHELAN.

Mr. Gladstone, the Liberal Statesman.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—

Old Carlyle says, that no nobler feeling than that of admiration for one higher than himself, dwells in the breast of man. If this be so, the world is not deficient in noble feelings, for admiration is freely awakened and generously given. But there are two orders of men who receive perhaps the greater share of this admiration, and they are the soldier and the statesman; and, if you have observed, the former apparently is accorded the greater meed of praise, for rarely is it that the statesman receives a guerdon commensurate with his labor; rarely is he assigned that high position by his contemporaries to which both the nature and importance of his work entitle him.

The popular eye sees at once and recognizes the blazing success of the general, *defending* his country; but seldom does it see the silent, unostentatious laborer, at the councils of state, *moulding* and *forming* his country. *Construction* is a matter of course—it is *destruction* that astonishes. Never, to the great mass, are the wonderful processes that evolved the earth a subject of surprise — the earthquake strikes them breathless!

But universal education—that grand agent for the correction of mankind—is slowly working a change; and as the years go on the statesman rises in popular esteem, because his works are becoming intelligible,

and because the people are becoming, more and more, identified with the state.

And this marks a happy era for the species; for, surround a people with every result of mere material growth, yet, if among them the god of war is adored and glorified, and elevated above the statesman, it indicates a lingering barbarity in the times, and testifies eloquently to the unsubdued savagery of man. If war is not always condemnable, it is always inferior: the soldier, at best, is but the instrument of the statesman; War is but the servitor of Peace. And, as has been well said, though it is a grand thing to fight for one's country, it is a grander thing to make one's country worth fighting for.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, we will discuss a statesman; and, by honoring him, we honor ourselves. For, though unheralded by salvos of guns and unattended by the pageantry of troops, and though unpossessed of titles to fame written in human blood, he is a warrior still: a warrior of peace in the cause of justice and good government,—I allude to the first citizen of one of the first nations of the earth—Mr. Gladstone.

But, before viewing his career, let us glance for a moment at the country over which he presides, and see in what it is great: for its importance is his importance.

England may be called great in two general particulars: First, in her wealth, her commerce, and her possessions; and again, in the influence she exerts and has exerted on many of the nations of the world, and through them on the destinies of mankind. And there

should be none more ready to acknowledge this than we of America. Our republic received its first impetus from the inborn freedom of Englishmen; and our laws and language and manners must look for their immediate origin to the same source. Though the British throne may have been occupied many times by despotic princes, yet the people—and they are the nation—have been uniformly and consistently true to liberty. For they possess that intrepidity of spirit and dauntless courage of action that sets at naught the mandates of a tyrant, and on more than one occasion they have resisted unauthorized acts of royalty at the peril of life and happiness.

It is among such a race of men that Mr. Gladstone is first; and it is owing more to his guidance than to any other man's, that England has progressed from what she was but a short time ago—little less than a despotism—to what she is to-day,—one of the freest countries of the world:

> "A land of settled government,
> * * * * *
> Where freedom slowly broadens down
> From precedent to precedent."

But though Mr. Gladstone stands out now as a grand figure, worthy our fullest admiration, and though he holds well-won claims to undying remembrance, yet he did not attain that eminence at a stride, nor did he in his early life give promise of the man we know to-day.

It is interesting, in considering his career, to note the over-mastering effects of association. For, it will be seen that the impressions which he received at

home and at school did much to warp his judgment, and though, for a time, they misguided his course, yet, when partially released from their influence, he bravely chose the right path; and the mistakes of his youth but now set in nobler relief the convictions of his age.

William Ewart Gladstone came from a good, old middle-class Scotch family; but the great English commercial city of Liverpool boasts of his birth,—an event which happened on the 29th of December, 1809.

His father, John Gladstone, was an enterprising and prosperous merchant, carrying on a trading business, principally with the West Indies, where he owned and conducted extensive sugar plantations.

As a supporter of Canning, he was actively interested in politics, and held a seat in parliament; there, like the good Tory that he was, he opposed every measure of reform, and finally, in 1845, for his distinguished services, and probably, also, in view of the rising greatness of his son, he was made a baronet by Sir Robert Peel.

William Ewart was early sent to Eton, and later to Oxford, where he graduated double first-class; *i. e.*, with the highest honors both in the classics and mathematics.

Owing in a great measure, probably, to the politics and interests of his father, and his associations at Christ Church, Mr. Gladstone was, in his undeveloped youth, a Tory; and, in consequence, his first appearance in public life was by no means auspicious.

Just after the passage of the great reform bill

of 1832, there was a general election. Mr. Gladstone was absent at the time on the continent; but enjoying the friendship of the Duke of Newcastle, who held the borough of Newark in his pocket, he was recalled home and tendered that seat in parliament.

His acceptance was almost equivalent to election; for in those days the landlord was dominant, and, to incur his displeasure, was something from which even the bravest would recoil: for it meant, in many instances, no home and no bread, little children's cries and mothers' tears; and the free spirit, struggling with necessity, would ask itself, "Shall I assert my manhood?" and thinking on the suffering it might entail, would falter and fall.

There can be no political independence where there is such absolute social dependence. The man who controls another's home and bread also controls his vote. And, to Mr. Gladstone's credit be it said, that in long years afterwards, when in power, he himself remedied this evil,—perhaps because his own condition at the time acquainted him with its enormity; for not only were the electors not free, but neither was Mr. Gladstone.

For you must know that when a man is under the patronage of a duke, he is, for all purposes, the property of that duke; he must, on all occasions, restrain his own feelings and convictions, and defer to his master, or seek a seat elsewhere.

O! it will be a happy day for England, and for the world, when men may dare to be free; when it will be possible for a man to be true to himself and still thrive; when he may seek political preferment without deviating from his sense of right, nor by leaving his manhood open to the faintest imputation of servility!

But what did Mr. Gladstone do in Parliament? Nothing, but what it were better to forget. He would, himself, to-day, be the severest critic of his own career.

The emancipation of slaves was, for instance, an issue at the time, and he opposed it. As a High-Church man he denied education to dissenters, and stood resolutely against the measure for removing the civil disabilities of the Jews.

And a little later, in 1838, he wrote a work on "The State and the Relation to the Church," which, though mercilessly demolished by Macauley in the *Edinburgh Review*, stood, nevertheless, as an obstacle in Mr. Gladstone's way. For even after he had outgrown these swaddling clothes of ideas he endeavored to make them fit his development, thinking probably any deviation from his recorded views would be a criminal inconsistency. So in 1844, when Sir Robert Peel introduced a bill for increasing the endowment of Maynooth College, Mr. Gladstone for this reason, resigned from the ministry, and thus retarded for a time his onward course.

But it is gratifying to note that in the same critique the eminent reviewer alluded to the right honorable gentleman as possessed of unblemished character and of distinguished parliamentary talents; the rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories—which verily he appeared to be.

But we must, in justice, attribute these indiscretions of unripe judgment to the evil influences of his education.

For Mr. Gladstone, himself, said in 1878, looking back on the past, that he traced in his education at Oxford one great defect, viz., that he did not learn there what he has learned since: to set a due value on the imperishable and inestimable principles of human

liberty. Bred, then, in propagandas of conservatism that dreaded every reform as a step towards national dissolution, that considered "tenant right as landlords' wrong," that regarded universal emancipation as universal anarchy, how could he escape contamination?

But the work of the speculative professors and lazy dignataries was not permanent. They lived to be confuted by the logic of events, events precipitated by him into whose youthful mind they had instilled false doctrine and false principles, by Mr. Gladstone. For they lived to see him create that condition of affairs which they described as chaos, and which they were abashed to find, in the face of their infallible theorizing, to be the perfection of order.

But, from these facts, there is a logical deduction which may be esteemed the vulnerable part of Mr. Gladstone's character, viz.: that he was not superior to circumstances; that he did not rise above the interests of his father and the fallacies of his alma mater, and assert the eternal principles of right, that slavery is wrong; to force a church upon a people is wrong; to deny to any man the same liberty which he claims for himself is wrong. But, in palliation, we must remember that youth is often a blunder; that a man is not always wise; that education is second nature; and that Gladstone went from school to Parliament. And note well, also, that when the honorable gentleman had time and experience to think and to observe—that is, when he was himself—he changed at once his front; and, though well advanced in public service, he had the moral courage to espouse those principles which his matured faculties taught him were right, and that governmental policy which he deemed best and safest for his country.

It was by gradual transitions then, that Mr. Gladstone departed from his youthful moorings and rode on the high sea of independence; a gust now and a gust then hurried him on; but not until there arose from old Oxford itself a stormy breeze of opposition (futilely designed to be disastrous), that his speed was accelerated and his course definitely directed.

Sir Robert Peel, recognizing, even at the earliest period of Mr. Gladstone's legislative career, his industry and ability, appointed him, in 1834, Junior Lord of the Treasury. And, again, in 1841, in the same statesman's cabinet, he held two positions, Master of the Mint and Vice-President of the Board of Trade. And two years later, as President of the Board of Trade, he showed the incipience of liberal proclivities by introducing and carrying an important measure controlling the domestic institution of railways. By the provisions of this bill a train was required to run the whole length of all roads twice a day, and the fare was fixed at one penny per mile. That wes thirty-eight years ago; and it is only now that our statesmen are awaking to the necessity of exercising a wise control over the railroads of our land.

But later, when Mr. Gladstone came again into power, he was a disciple of Free Trade. During this administration, he redeemed his record on the Jewish disabilities question by throwing the weight of his eloquence in favor of Baron Rothschild, who, though elected to parliament for London, had been denied his seat.

And the gradual growth of his Liberalism may further be traced in the outcome of his visit to Italy, in 1850; for, through a series of letters to Aberdeen, the then English premier, he drew the attention of the

powers to the iniquities of Neapolitan prison life, under King Ferdinand, and thus rendered a splendid service to the cause of Freedom in Europe.

But it was not until 1853, after having driven Mr. Disraeli out, that he first became Chancellor of the Exchequer, a position which he has adorned as none others have. And it is in the exercise of the duties of this office that he has won the reputation of being, perhaps, the first financier of the century. In presenting his budgets, he made a romance of figures, and gave a charm to statistics that was as marvellous as it was unprecedented.

In this high position he remained during Lord Palmerston's long term, and ministered the finances of the Crimean war with notable success.

But we mentioned that Mr. Gladstone had adopted free trade principles, and this led to two changes fraught with interesting results: First, he felt it incumbent on him to give up his seat for Newark, for the Duke of Newcastle was an uncompromising protectionist; and secondly, his faith in the sufficiency of conservatism was seriously and irreparably shaken.

But, though he gave up his seat for Newark, that fact did not exclude him from parliament; for Oxford returned her gifted son to the councils of the nation.

And herein we may see the apparent advantage the English system has over our own, in this, viz.: That it is provided that men of merit and reputation may be continued in power. For it is so ordered that a man of approved worth may rarely be without a seat, having the right to stand in any part of the nation for any constituency, or for several constituencies at the same time, as he may elect; and hence his chances of success are many compared to the candidate's under our system,

who must reside in that district for which he is chosen.

But this specious defect is really the corner-stone of our system; for the very difference to which we refer maintains, in its purity and effect, that which it was originally designed to be, and what it in fact is, viz.: a representative government. How can a stranger to the wants of a district properly represent it? To whom is the representative responsible? To his constituency. But what control does the constituency exercise over the representative, if he is independent of it for preferment? If he be ambitious only, and not conscientious, as most politicians are, what is to make him attentive to the interests of the community, if his fortunes are not tied to his neighbors and friends?

And, again, the English system encourages the growth of professional politicians, and this is manifestly contrary to the genius of our institutions. But it is worthy of note that when men have appeared among us with peculiar fitness for the duties of state, they have not been wanting in opportunity; witness, *e. g.*, Clay, Webster, and Benton.

But we remarked that the second consequence of Mr. Gladstone's conversion to free trade was his falling off from the conservative faith. This was because protection had long been a tenet of Toryism, and finding it in error in this particular, he naturally began to doubt its other claims and pretensions.

But old Oxford, like a jealous mistress, with frowning mien, viewed his change of politics; and when, some years later, he appealed to her for a renewal of confidence, she was cold and unsympathetic. Yes; Oxford, after a close struggle, refused him her academic seat in 1865; and, as the sequel will show, nothing better could have happened Mr. Gladstone. In his

own words, the result "unmuzzled" him. The restraints which attach to a member for a learned constituency were ruthlessly withdrawn, and he was free—

> "Free as the torrents are that leap the rocks,
> And plough the valleys without asking leave."

In the spirit of independence, like the released animal, he bounded for his element. From Oxford he appealed to Manchester, that hive of honest industry, which weaves the garment of national wealth and strength, and the armor plate of national defense, and was triumphantly returned. He now recognized no dictator save his conscience and his judgment. The one enjoined him to be just, the other directed him to the people, whose good he saw to be the nation's. He heard and he obeyed.

Whence, behold his liberal politics! The party of which he was the rising hope he had abandoned, and what a glorious apostacy it was! No act of his as a member of the Tory organization became him so much as the leaving of it. And why? Because Toryism meant stagnation, if not, indeed, retrogression. It meant caste and hate, and strife and jealousy; for locked affectionately in the embrace of its ancestry, it cared little for present, and nothing for the future.

As on over-eager Liberal once said: "It is the stupidest of parties." But when he was interrupted, and an apology demanded by the House, he explained that he never meant to say that the Conservatives were generally stupid, but that he did mean to say that stupid persons were generally conservative. But Mr. Gladstone has recorded his opinion, in no uncertain words, when he said, that the principle of the Conservative party was jealously of the people only qualified

by fear; but the principle of the Liberal party was trust in the people, only qualified by prudence.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, we have reviewed briefly the right honorable gentleman's early errors of inexperience, their causes and excuse; and have traced in his public acts and utterances, his conversion to the true political faith.

From that hour success became commonplace; ever in power he ever gave satisfaction. And, though well declined into the vale of years, he is, to-day at the head of a popular government, devoting his matchless ability and untiring energy to the great work by conforming the integrity of the empire to the principles of justice.

If Victoria's reign is a success it is owing to the fact that

> "Statesmen at her councils met,
> Who knew the seasons when to take
> Occasion by the hand, and make
> The bonds of freedom wider yet."

And of these must the great commoner rank first; for his public acts, of home and foreign policy, stand the test, as no rivals do, of liberal and rational politics. For whether in dealing with franchise, with land tenure, with Irish grievances, or with foreign complications, we find the same fairness, the same foresight and the same political wisdom.

Look, for instance, at the elective franchise. It is owing, in a great measure, to the statemanship of Mr. Gladstone, that the qualifications are growing "beautifully less." While his short-sighted opponents look upon every movement in that direction as fraught with peril, he, Jove-like, looking before and after, regards it as necessary to a more perfect freedom, and

freedom as necessary to the strength and stability of England.

In introducing his Reform Bill of 1866 (alluding to those who, under its operation would become electors), he said, "Give to these persons a new interest in the Constitution and it shall beget in them a new attachment. And the attachment of the people to the institutions and laws under which they live, is, after all, more than gold and silver, or more than fleets and armies, at once the strength, the glory and the safety of the land."

And who will question this? Mr. Disraeli, "The Juggler of the Jingoes," did on that occasion; and said, with great alarm, that Mr. Gladstone was Americanizing their institutions.

And such indeed was the fact; and no doubt the process will go on until the people, conscious of their enlightenment, will trust themselves with their own government, and select the head of their own State.

For the more we think the more absurd does it appear that a great people like the English, should be dependent for their rulers on the vagaries of royal succession; that they should be subject to foreign idiots and brutes, as the Georges, and only guaranteed peace and good government when a woman like Victoria succeeds to the throne, too weak to exercise her prerogatives, and only loved because she is not Queen.

Mr. Gladstone is, *par excellence*, a citizen of the world; and while he remains in power, and he will, says Mr. Walter, of *The Times*, as long as he lives, it requires no prophet to forecast the future.

His patriotism does not limit the sphere of his vision, nor embarrass his judgment. He looks beyond

Landsend, and while he marvels that so much good can come out of the American Nazareth, he does not fail to be instructed. Though Britannia may "rule the *waves*," may he not also agree that it would be more profitable for her to rule *herself?*

In 1878, an article appeared in the *North American Review*, over his name, entitled "Kin Beyond Sea,' in which he admits American supremacy; and he says that while England has been advancing with portentous rapidity, we have been passing her by in a canter, and he quotes a line of pathetic beauty and sweet concession from Horace:

"O matri forti filia fortior."*

But the other day, that eminently respectable journal, the *London Spectator*, commenting on our President's death, and alluding to the presidency, said that all Englishmen were interested in the only Englishman who reigns by election (that is, our Executive), and are solicitous that he do nothing to lower an office that half of them feel must one day exist in England.

This news ought to be welcome to every American whose patriotism embraces his race. In the words of their own poet, may we not echo back, with reassuring voice?—

"Ring out the old, ring in the new;
* * * * * *
Ring out the false, ring in the true."

But to return: What particularly attracted the Liberal statesman's attention, on accession to power, as one of the rankest weeds permitted to flourish by Tory husbandmen, was the Protestant Established Church of Ireland.

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*O! Daughter, stronger than thy mother strong.

In a land three-fourths of whose people were of the Catholic faith, it was an outrage and an injustice. But Mr. Gladstone, in the face of a virulent opposition, introduced his famous resolutions that the Irish church cease to exist as an establishment; the consummation of which is deemed the most remarkable legislative achievement of modern times, having elicited, in the course of its passage, more bitter and earnest controversy than the memorable Reform bill of 1832.

The good old churchmen and archæological Tories—of whom the iconoclast himself was once a well-deserving member—saw, one by one, the barriers which protected their privileges passing away, and for once they saw right.

"Interdum pauci rectum vident." *

It is not certain that Mr. Gladstone is without respect for prescriptive privileges; but it is certain that if privilege and justice conflict, he has more respect for justice. So the Irish church was duly disestablished.

Throughout the whole course of the Premier's dealings with Ireland, he has sought to give vitality to the views of Charles James Fox, which were: to have the Irish government regulated by Irish prejudices, and it would, as a result, be found that the more she is under Irish government, the more she will be bound to English interests.

And that is true: Let England extend voluntarily to Ireland a wise, humane, and altogether just policy, and she will dismiss her agitators; and if Ireland could be secure in this by adequate representation in parliament, or by a local government, as the more distant

* Interdum vulgus rectum videt.—*Altered.* (The crowd sometimes see right.)

colonies have, it would be both advantageous to England and Ireland alike.

It is very probable that Mr. Gladstone never would concede to Ireland that absolute independence which her more patriotic sons demand, for it must be remembered that Mr. Gladstone is an English statesman, and, however desirable it might be to Ireland, from an English stand-point such a concession would be wholly impolitic, inasmuch as it would be the entering wedge of national disintegration.

It is safe to say that Mr. Gladstone, though unimpassioned, is as keenly sensible to Ireland's condition as her more demonstratively devoted champions. And conciliation is his means for binding Ireland to England, as he himself has expressed it, "with the silken cords of love."

He at once perceived that the chief cause of Irish disaffection was the insecurity of land tenure. And he devoted himself to its remedy, not as he told his opponents, for a mere party triumph, but as a "common work of common love and good will for the common good of the common country."

To this end he introduced the great Land Bill of 1870. His success was complete, and "by a vote of 296 to 220," says Mr. Smith, his biographer, "the House thus decided on the long disputed question of Irish land, Ireland had been right and England wrong."

But during this current year, as you all know, the whole question was again brought before the House, and Mr. Gladstone introduced and successfully carried, though not without opposition within and without his cabinet, another land bill more generous even in its terms and more promising in its results.

But so convulsed was Ireland at the time, and so disposed were the people to violate laws for which they had no respect, that the Premier was compelled by the exigency of the occasion to carry certain repressive measures as embodied in the Coercion Bill. Many, with some show of reason, regard this as the mistake of his administration; but his act is not without justification.

It is clear that the ordinary operation of the law in Ireland was then impossible; and, further, that certain laws, or want of laws, worked hardship to the people. In the first place then, it was his duty to remedy those laws, or to enact needful laws; but, while the remedial legislation was pending, it was also his duty, as the conservator of public order, to insist on the observance of existing law; for, after all, unless the law can command obedience, life and liberty are insecure, and the great ends of government are thwarted.

The tenantry, the great mass of the people, no doubt, suffered cruel wrongs, but they were not the only class in Ireland that had legal rights. By the laws of England the landlords had rights to personal security, personal liberty, and to private property. If Mr. Gladstone, as the responsible head of the State, failed to protect them in their rights, it would have been cowardice; and if he failed to relieve the people of their wrongs, it would have been injustice. But what did he do? He did both, and he did well; if he suspended the forms of liberty, it was in order to preserve its substance.

But, within the last few days, the Wires have informed us that Mr. Gladstone, at Leeds, charged Mr. Parnell with having ungenerously obstructed his Land bill and its after operation.

There is no doubt but that Mr. Parnell did what he could to oppose the passage of the bill, and no doubt but that he thereby committed an error of judgment.

For, to quote what certainly is impartial authority—Archbishop Croke—"The Land Act," he said, the other day, "is far superior in breadth and variety, and in the value of the provisions, to any other Land Act ever passed by Parliament."

Then is it not only decent for a generous people to give the bill a fair trial? Mr. Parnell was unwilling to give it such a trial, and did he not err?

No other English statesman, save Mr. Gladstone, would have thus imperilled his ministry with such a radical measure, and gone to such a pass for the Irish people; and is it becoming in them now not even to thank him? It is to be hoped that, if Mr. Parnell does not, the Irish people do apprciate what Mr. Gladstone has done.

But, to-day, you might have read again, that Mr. Dillon very intemperately attacked the great statesman.

Nobody ever questioned the honesty and sincerity of these gentlemen, but we must question their discretion in this matter. If Mr. Gladstone had disposssessed every landlord and proclaimed Ireland's independence, these gentlemen would have been satisfied.

Who but the most visionary would entertain any such hope, or count upon such an event, even as a probability. Action only, and not agitation merely, could reap such a harvest. But Mr. Gladstone is working the desired change by degrees, and by degrees must all beneficial changes come.

But while the ungenerous attitude of the Land Leaguers may be censured, their labor should not in

the least be discouraged. They would, indeed, be imprudent leaders if they accepted the Land bill as conclusive, but they should accept it for its present value, viz.: As a step in the right direction.

They should cease to agitate only when the people of the country own the land of the country; but they should not be blind, and fail to see that it will be long again before they find an English statesman so ready to contribute to that end as Mr. Gladstone. They should be with him now, and not against him. But, in their insensate devotion, they forget their utter impotence, whether in or out of parliament, to effect any great result by themselves.

But enough: When the clouds that darken the present are dissipated, may the happy condition of Ireland be Mr. Gladstone's best defense!

The impartial historian, writing when the men whose deeds he records have long passed away, will probably credit the English Premier of to-day with greater renown as a home minister than as a hatcher of schemes for foreign conquest, or as a meddler in continental politics.

In this respect, he will be unlike his great rival, Mr. Disraeli, who was, perhaps, the most remarkable personage that, in our time, has strutted his brief hour upon this mundane stage. Not remarkable, indeed, for great wisdom, great foresight, or great deeds; no, but for a peculiar, bewildering personality, which made him notable by making him singular.

For instance, as a proscribed member of a proscribed race, he sought a seat in parliament. When asked by Lord Melbourne what was his intention in doing so, he answered: "I want to be prime minister." When before the electors without a platform, he was

asked upon what he stood; he replied, with as much conceit as wit: "I stand upon my head."

These incidents best portray the man; for self-sufficiency, egotism, and impudence, he stands a monumental wonder. He was a man without principle and without consistency, and, as he says of himself in *Tranced*, he was ready to adopt any opinion and possess none. And how so superficial and insincere a politician could conciliate the favor even of the Tories, is the greater wonder still.

But it is not necessary to belittle Mr. Disraeli in order to exalt Mr. Gladstone. For they are two widely different men—different in all things that constitute manhood and statesmanship—different in aspirations, in principles, in talents, and in methods.

Mr. Gladstone's great end is his country. Mr. Disraeli's great end was himself; personal exaltation was the light which led him on. If he ever thought of the glory of England, it was always in connection with the glory of Mr. Disraeli. Ostensibly, he was a minister to his country; but, in fact, with admirable adroitness, he made his country a minister to him. Well has his policy been described as one of legerdemain, for he would conjure up, at pleasure, crowns and forgotten islands for his Queen. What it cost England to maintain so brilliant a statesman is unknown; but it is known that, by Cyprus, he increased the British possessions, and that, by thousands of pounds, he increased the national debt.

But if we are to judge a statesman by his substantial work and individual worth, then, in the presence of simple Mr. Gladstone, must the Earl of Beaconsfield hide his diminished head; for, first and foremost, Mr. Gladstone is an earnest and a conscientious man.

If, however, you believe that statesmanship is not consistent with the principles of right and the maintenance of national honor, Mr. Gladstone is not a statesman.

But if true statesmanship consists in conducting the affairs of the government, at home and abroad, wisely, honorably and economically, never listening to the allurements of aggrandizement at the cost of principle; never encouraging unnecessary wars; never subordinating national interests to personal ends, and always remembering, that, while

> "It is an excellent thing to have a giant's strength;
> It is tyrannous to use it as a giant,"

then, Mr. Gladstone is without a peer; and those who compare Mr. Disraeli to him in any capacity, but confess to that fatal disposition of the guileless moth, and are enraptured and attracted by empty ostentation of glare.

But if there be any one who thinks that Mr. Gladstone's attitude of peace, with dignity, is unbecoming a great people, let him look at the nations of Europe to-day, and answer: Have we not reason to expect more of a civilized continent at the close of the nineteenth century?

Those nations are no better than bandits, as far as justice and honor are concerned, which they sacrifice unhesitatingly to material expediency, and thus eke out their feverish existences in mutual dread.

Mr. Disraeli would encourage this by making England a party to a compact recognizing interest, and not right, as the rule of conduct, and the brute force of contending armies as the only arbiter under Heaven.

By a simple negative of the Disraelian policy does

Mr. Gladstone prove himself the greater statesman and the better man.

But, ladies and gentlemen, we have already presumed too much on your attention, but we plead, in apology, the greatness of our theme.

Since 1832 Mr. Gladstone has been in public life, and probably no statesman has accomplished so much.

His march has ever been onward; and, though it must one day cease, it shall never be to turn back.

The work he has inaugurated and the example he has set, will be hereafter to his countrymen a sign by which to conquer.

His deeds will bear the scrutiny of ages. His epitaph will be, "He was just."

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